A Sermon of repentaunce.

A very godly and profitable Sermon, preached at Lee in Essex, by Arthur Dent, *Minister of Gods word. And published at the request of sundrie Godly and vvell disposed persons.*

1581. *the 7. of March.*

Ionah. chap. 2. ver. 8.

They that waite vpon lying vanities,
Forsake their owne mercie.

Imprinted at London for Iohn Harison, *and are to bee solde at the white Greihound in* Paules Church-yard
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To the Reader.

Although I was moſte vnwilling that this poore Talent and trauaile of myne, ſhould euer haue bene broched abroade, and come to light: both becauſe it maye ſeeme as a Candle lighted at noone day: as alſo becauſe many other mennes doinges might more worthely a great deale haue ben publiſhed, and committed vnto letters: Yet becauſe diuers which heard it preached with a liuely voice, were very inſtant, yea, and more then importunate with mee to haue it publiſhed, vſing ſuche reaſons as I coulde not well gainesay, I did at the laſt yeelde to their requeſt, and ſo this vntimely fruite is come abroade, to be ſolde in open markettes. Let no man be offended that I haue not ſtrained my ſelfe to flye an high pitch, to ſome out the froth of mans wiſdome, and to make a great ſhew of learning, by blowing the bladder of vanity, till it burſt with ſwelling. For that is not my vſe. I ſeeke eſpeciall the ſaluation of the

To the Reader.

ſimple and ignorant, and therefore ſtoupe downe to their reach and capacitie. Therefore I beſeeche thee gentle Reader, accepte my good meaning: Reade this without preiudice, like it as thou profiteſt, ſo ſhalte thou haue praiſe of God, & comforte in thy conſcience.

A.D.

The Text. Luke.13.5.

I tell you nay: but except you repent you shall likewise perish.

THE occasion of these wordes of our Lorde and Sauiour Jesus Christe, was bicause there were certayne that shewed him of the Galileans, whose bloud Pilate had mingled with their owne Sacrifices: That is, murthered them as they were sacrificing: and so their bloude was mingled with the bloud of the beastes whiche were sacrificed. Those men therefore, though that these Galileans were greater sinners then all other Galileans, because they had suffered suche thinges. And that those xviii. also, vppon whome the Tower in Siloam fell and slue them, were sinners aboue all men, that dwelte in Hierusalem. Wherein they did vtter a secret corruptiõ naturally ingendred in all men, that is verie sharply to see into the sinnes of others, & seuerely to censure thē: but in the meane

while to flatter themselues, & to bée blindfold in séeing their owne sinnes. For these men thought, because the like iudgmentes did not fall vpon them, therfore they were safe inough, they were not so great sinners but rather highly in the fauour of GOD. According as many doe falsly suppose, that those are alwayes the worst sort of people whome God doeth moste strike, and presse with his punishing hande, hauinge forgotten that God doeth not kéepe an ordinarie rate here belowe, to punishe euery man as he is worst, or to fauour and cocker him as he is best, but onely taketh some examples as he thinketh good, for the instruction and aduertisement of all others, and to be as it were loking glasses, wherein euerie man may sée his owne face, yea, and his owne cause handeled, & that God is a seuere reuenger of sin, that all men maie learne by the example of some, to tremble & beware, least peraduenture they bée worthily constrayned to kéepe their owne turnes, and to knowe what they haue deserued. These men whiche broughte these newes to our Sauiour Christ, had not taken forth this lesson, whereupon our Sauiour is iustlye occasio-

occasioned to correcte their erroneous, and sinister Iudgement, and to teach them that they must not reioice at the iuste punishement of others, but rather to bée instructed thereby to repentance.

And further to signifie, that God doeth not alwayes most punishe the moste notorious offenders, as Murtherers, Théeues, Robbers, Whoremaisters, Blasphemers, Quarrellers, Scoffers, and suche like, but reserueth them vnto the iudgement of the greate daie, and as it wére fatteth them against the daie of slaughter: and therefore he answereth them negatiuely, and sayeth nay, or not so, but excepte you repente, you shal all likewise perish: as if he should say, are you of this opinion indéede, that onelie monstruous Sinners are punished in this worlde, & others let alone: or that the Galileans, and these eighténe vppon whome the Tower in Siloã fel, were greater sinners then all others? Or doe you thinke because the same Iudgementes haue not light vpon you, therefore you shal steale away in the darke, & escape the Iudgement of God? No, no, you are deceyued. For I saie vnto you, that, except you mourne and

lament for your sinnes, and fall to some agreement with God in time (you I say, euen you whiche are so readie to condemne others, and iustifie your selues) shall not onely perish with the like iudgementes in this presente worlde, but be euerlastingly condemned in the world to come. So that our Sauiour in so saying, doeth thunder downe a most dreadfull sentence vpon all our heades: for he concludeth and setteth it downe, that all men liuing vpō the face of the earth, whether they bee highe or lowe, rich or poore, young or olde, noble or vnnoble, learned or vnlearned, simple or politicke, of what estate, degree, and condition soeuer they bee liuing, and dying without repentaunce, shall perishe and bee damned in hell fire for euer. The Scriptures are full of suche Thunderboltes: Iohn. 3. 18. Hee that beleeueth not is damned alreadie. And 2. *Cor*. 13. verse. 5. Proue your selues whether you are in the Fayth, examine your selues. Knowe yee not your owne selues that Iesus Christ is in you, except yee bee reprobates? Where the Apostle flatlie setteth downe, that all those whiche haue not Christ dwelling in their harts by faith

Which

which is the houlhold ſiſter of repentance, are no better then repꝛobates, caſtawayes, and condemned perſons. But becauſe the moſt people in thoſe dayes are groſſye deceiued in repentaunce, both concerning what it is, what it meaneth, what it wooꝛketh, what bee the qualities, & conditions of it, which be the cauſes, and which be the lets and hinderances, and alſo why, when, and wherefoꝛe we ſhould repent. Therfoꝛe I haue in pꝛeſẽt intent to teach firſt what is repentaunce. Secondly, which bee his qualities and effectes. Thirdly, when wee ſhould repente. Fourthly, wherefoꝛe wee ſhould repent. And laſt of all what letteth vs from Repentaunce: whiche oꝛder, and methode of teaching although ſome maye miſlike (as indeede with me it is not oꝛdinary,) yet conſide ring the matter I haue in hand, I thinke it not inconuenient. But the matter. Repentance is an inward ſoꝛrowing, and continuall mourninge of the heart and conſcience foꝛ ſinne ioyned with fayth and both inwarde, and outwarde amendement: Inward I ſay in chaunging the thoughtes and affections of the hearte: and outwarde in chaunging the wooꝛdes,

and wrykes from euill to god. This repentaunce no doubte was in Dauid, who whē he was couertly reproued by the prophet Nathan, and his sinnes laid before his eyes, did not stubbornly defende them, and so iuckle against God: nor yet secretlie excuse them, and daube them ouer, but cryed out in the bitternesse of his hearte: I haue sinned, and therupon made the 51. Psalm. A Psalme indæd full of dolour and heauines: Wherein the Prophet bewayleth his falles, lamenteth his sinnes, and praieth euen for a newe hearte, and a newe spirite, newe thoughtes, newe affections, newe purposes of amendment of life. So that in Dauid wée maie sée an inward sorrowing, a lasting griefe (as the booke of Psalmes doeth euerie where declare, whiche layeth him out as it were in an Anotamie) yea, and greate reformation, both in inwarde, & outward sinnes. Héere therefore beholde what is Repentaunce. Likewise S. Peter through infirmity hauing denied his Lord and Mayster Christ, and béeing punched of his owne conscience, & wakened with the alaram of a pore Cockes crowing, wente out of the Courte of Pilate with a heauie

heart weeping bitterlie, & euer after stoutlie professing Christe euen vnto the death. See then what is Repentaunce. The Prophetes in the olde Testament exhortinge ỹ rebellious Iewes vnto Repentance, vse commonly an Hebrew verbe which signifieth turne ye, or returne yee & come backe again, by the which Metaphore is meant, that like as a man that is strayed farre out of his way, must turne quite backe againe the contrary way: So those ỹ haue strayed from the wayes of Godlinesse, to the way of sinne, must come backe againe, as fast as euer they went forwarde, & altogether change the course of their life: so that Repentaunce is an earnest turninge vnto God with all our harte, soule, and minde. Saint Iohn Baptist, and the Apostles in the Newe Testament exhorting vnto Repentaunce, vse a Greeke worde which signifieth a chaunging of the minde afterwarde, or afterwitte, so that those whiche through their follie & want of former wit, haue slipped into the deepe pit, and daungerous gulfe of sinne, when they come to themselues, & haue recouered their wits, will bee wise afterward, & take heede they

neuer

neuer come there againe according to the Proverb: The burnt childe will take heed of the Fire. By this time I hope you see what is repentaunce. It is not euery sorrowe, but sorrowe for sinne, not for some sinne, but for all sinne, not for an houre, but for euer, not for a day, but continually, not for a week, but as longe as we liue. Some thinke euerie sorrow is repentaunce: but so should worldlinges repent. Some thinke euery litle pante for sinne is repentaunce: so should Pharaoh repente. Some thinke all weeping and lamenting for sinne is repentaunce: so should Esau, Iudas & Caine, repent. Some thinke euery litle humbling of our selues is repentaunce: but so should Achab repent. Some think ỳ good words, and good purposes is Repentaunce: but so shoulde euerie sicke man repent. Some thinke ỳ reformation of words and deeds, is Repentaunce: but so shoulde ciuill men repent. Some thinke that crye God mercie is repentaunce: and so shoulde euerie foole repent. You see therfore how many are deceiued in repentaunce: but if you will see what it is indeede, looke backe to ỳ which hath beene said afore. For hee that will repent

pent in good earnest, must not hang downe his head like a Bulrushe for a daye onely, and so haue doone, nor crie from the teeth outwarde, Lord haue mercie on me, and so away: but he must make a back reckoning with diligente consideration of his former life, As did the Prophet Dauid. Psal. 119. ver. 59. I haue considered my wayes and turned my feete vnto thy testimonyes. So must euerie one that meaneth to repēt slinke aside into some corner or out place, that there hee may haue roome enough to beate his owne conscience, & to make his heart smart for his sinnes, by aggrauation thereof, & weighing all the circumstances, as in the 9. of Daniel: The Church of God confesseth her sinne, not lightlye but with woonderfull great exaggeration, and heaping of one thinge to another. So that it is not enough to say I haue sinned, but to say I haue most traitrously sinned, I haue most obstinatly, carelesly, and rebelliously sinned, I haue mōstrously offended in such a place, in such a houre, in such companie, in such a day. In suche a corner in the darke I committed adulterie closly, when I thought none had seene mee: In suche a

chamber

Chamber I defiled my neighbours wife: mine owne conscience doeth accuse me of it. In suche and such company I haue bene dronke, I haue spoken and railed against Gods worde, I haue mocked the preachers, I haue spared no othes, nor filthy spæch, and now O Lorde, Lorde, what an vgley monster, and wretched villaine am I. Here I stand before thy presence all naked, blinde, wounded, poore, wretched, and miserable, hauing deserued a thousand damnations, if thou shouldest enter into iudgement, and trie the lawe with me. Therefore I beseeche thee shewe pitie, and compassion vpon me. Anoint my woundes with the oyle of mercy: restore mee my sight, cloath my nakednes, enrich me that am poore, strengthen me that am weake: helpe mee that am fallen: oh bid me not farewell. The infant ouercõmeth his mother with crying, the child his father with wæping, & the seruaunt his master by entreaty, & wilt not ỹ be intreated O Lorde? Thus I say if euerie man would speak in his conscience to God, & thus narrowly or more narrowly, examine himself, vndoubtedly he were in the way of repentaunce.

But alas it is a woꝛlde to ſée howe the blinde Buſſards, and croked cancrewoꝛmes of this woꝛlde, go awꝛyꝛe from this rule, deceiuing themſelues with the bare title and naked name of repentance. Many in déede can talke of it: but few walke it it. Many ſpeake of it: but fewe féele it. Many deſcribe it: but fewe knowe it. It is hidde and locked vp from the woꝛlde, and reuealed onely to Gods childꝛen. Many think they haue caught it, when they haue but the ſhadow of it. It is ſo high that few can reache it. It is ſo déepe that few can come to the bottome of it. It is ſo narrow that fewe can pearce into it. So wide that few can compꝛehend it. So ſlippery that fewe can holde it. So ſecrete that few can finde it. Therefoꝛe my deare bꝛethꝛen, I beſéech you let vs pꝛay vnto our God, that hee woulde reueale vnto vs this myſtery which is hid from the woꝛld, that we may truly ſée it, and knowe it, finde it, & féele it to our endles comfoꝛt, thꝛough Chꝛiſt Ieſus: which grace he graunt vs.

But nowe to the ſeconde point concerning the qualities, and fruites of repentance. One ſpeciall qualitie of repentance

is alwayes to bringe with it remission of sinnes: for where true repentance goeth before, there remission of sinnes muste necessarily followe after, not that repentance deserueth remission of sinne: but because where God worketh repentance, there hee pardoneth sin because of his promisse. As in Ezech. 18.27. When the wicked turneth awaye from his wickednesse that hee hath committed, and doeth that which is lawfull and righte, he shall saue his soule aliue. And againe, Esay. 55.7. Let the wicked forsake his wayes, and the vnrighteous his owne imaginations, and returne vnto the Lorde, and hee will haue mercy vppon him. So here we see to whom forgiuenesse of sinnes, and the mercies of God belongeth: Namely to the penitent sinners, to those that leaue sinne, and imbrace Godlines: to those that forsake his owne waies, and imaginations, & turne vnto the Lord. And as for such as walk on in their owne wayes, and follow ỹ delightes of sin without any sorrow, or purpose to leaue them, they haue nothing to doe with the mercie of God: & though Iesus Christe had suffred an hundred deathes (which could not

bee) yet shal no vnpenitent sinner haue remission of his sinnes by his death, nor any other benefites of his Passion, for they belong onely to his Churche, and chosen people here vpon the earth. He therefore that is not of the Church, he that is not grafted into Christ by fayth, he that is not a member of his mystical body, can inioy nothing by Christes death. If any man abide not in me, he is cast foorth as a braunch, and withereth, and men gather them, and caste them into the fire, and they burne. Iohn. 15. 9. We reade in the 29. of Deutcronomie, Howe God barreth all stubburne sinners from his mercie, and doeth most terrible shote out against them. Yee that heareth the wordes of this curse, and blesseth him selfe in his heart, saying, I shal haue peace although I walke according to the stubburnnes of our owne heart, thus adding dronkennesse to thirste: the Lord will not be mercifull vnto him, but then the wrath of the Lorde, and his iealousie shall smoke against that manne, and euery curse that is written in this booke, shal light vppon him. So that God saith playnely, hee hath no mercie for such as walke in the vayne

delights of ſinne, and in the ſtubbornes of their owne heart, adding drunkenneſſe to thirſt, that is one horrible ſin to another. Yet for all this it is a wonder to ſée, how ỹ blind wormes of this earth deceiue thẽ ſelues. For they thinke whatſoeuer they ſay, whatſoeuer they doe, be it good, be it euill, whether they repẽt, or not repent, yet they ſhalbe ſaued by chriſts death, as thogh they would make it a baud to their ſinnes, & ſo worke that villany againſt Chriſt. I hope to be ſaued by Chriſts death, aſwell as the beſt of them all ſayth ſome. But where is thy repentaunce thou miſerable wretche? Doeſt thou thinke that Gods mercy is common to all? and Chriſts death a baude for thy ſinnes? No no, when it commeth to the vpſhotte, thou ſhalt ſtoppe ſhorte. For it will proue farre otherwiſe: for thou ſhalt finde Gods mercye turned into Juſtice: and Chriſtes death into Wormwood: becauſe thou hatedſt knowledge, and chooſedſt not the feare of the Lorde. Thus you ſée my deare brethren, that Repentaunce muſt nédes go before forgiuenelſe of ſinnes, & where it leadeth not the way, there the gates of Gods mercie are ſhutte vp,

and

and this is the first qualitie of repentance. It hath also another condition and that is, to alter and chaunge men from that they were before, not in the substance and proportion of the body: but in the qualities & conditions of the minde. For whosoeuer hath truely repented, you shall by and by see a moste marueilous, and wonderfull chaunge in him, so that he will not doe as he hath done, nor speake as he hath spokē, nor companie as he hath companied, nor play the good fellowe (as they terme it) as he was wont to do, nor runne to the same excesse of riot he was wont. And this is it that amazeth the world, and causeth them to bristle and some at the mouth like wild Bores, and to speake euil of them that are turned vnto God. For the worlde loueth his owne, and cannot abide that GOD should plucke one feather frō his Wings. But repentaunce doth violently pull men out of the clawes of Sathan, and chaunge them from the conditions of the world, for it maketh of proude, humble, of hurtefull, harmelesse, of cruell, meeke, of Wolues, Lambes, of Lions, Sheepe, of adulterers, Chaste liuers, of Drunkardes, sober men,

of Swearers, reuerent speakers, of Haters, Louers, of Despisers, Imbracers, of Scoffers, Followers, of Earthly, Heauenly, of Deuils, Saintes. All this worketh Repentance. Paul trauelled towards Damascus, a Moolse, a Persecuter, a bloodsucker, an hater, a despiser: but ere he came there, he was quite chaunged, and cleane of an other mind. So mighty was he that met him by the way: When Iesus Christ sent downe the holy Ghost vpon his Disciples, according to his promise, there were some scoffers at Hierusalem, which mocked and said, they are ful of new wine: But the same men cryed out by and by after, men and brethren, what shal we doe to be saued. Here was a moste wonderfull and sodaine chaunge. See then the force of Repentaunce, when God striketh it into the heart of man, and driueth the nayle to the head as they say. It effecteth that which all the wisedome and policie of man, is not able to bring to passe, no when they haue prolled hether and thether, and hide their heades together, and sought al the corners of their wits, yet can they not tell which way to turne their hande, or

where to begin to chaunge the hearte of a man, and to conuerte him to God. Therefore Repentaunce is stronger then all the whole worlde, and worketh that whiche all men with their naturall wittes, fine heades, and deepe deuises can not compasse for the conuersion of a Sinner, is a worke supernaturall. Here then we haue a glasse to beholde our selues in, whether euer we haue Repented or no. For if wee find not this change and alteration in vs, we haue not repented, and so consequently remaine vnder Damnation. Therefore, let euerie man looke vnto himselfe, for marke how muche he is chaunged, and altred from his former euill wayes, so much hath he repented. And he that is the same man he was three, foure, eight, nay thirtie yeares agoe, surely, surely, hee hath not repented, and therefore abideth in damnation. I maruell then howe those menne, which neuer felt anie change, or alteration wrought in them, nay, whose consciences tell them, that they are not chaunged, ne knowe what it meaneth, can haue any hope of saluation: Vnlesse peraduenture they beleeue not this doctrine, or think it to

be false. But I will sende ouer these men to suche as haue bene in the like case they nowe are, and yet thought they might doe well enough for all that, although both blinde in Iudgement, and corrupt in conuersation. I haue knowen and doe knowe men, which before their conuersion, and inward chaunge, were counted as honeste men, as euer brake breade, and as substantiall men as any coulde bee, as true dealers, vpright liuers, & good housekeepers as any of their neighboures, yea, and they had the same opinion of them selues too: And yet notwithstanding when they haue felte Repentaunce worckinge this chaunge and alteration in them, through the power of the Spirite, at the preaching of the word, and when they haue had new hearties giuen them to discerne better, and newe eyes to see better, as men come out of a dampe, haue wondered and marueiled at the palpable and grosse darkenesse they were in before, and haue burst forth into these wordes, that they woulde not bee in the same case they were afore, no not for all the worldes goodes, for if they shoulde haue died in that case, they were sure they shold

haue

haue bene damned: But I pray you what case were they in before, were they not good honest men, & well accounted of, and honest liuers, and well taken whersoeuer they came? Surely they were so taken in the world, but nowe they thinke far otherwise of thẽselues, their eyes being opened, and their Iudgementes enlightened, for nowe they see that they saue not before, nowe they vnderstand ỹ God condemneth many, whome the worlde iustifieth. He thinketh this example shoulde make ciuill and worldely men see and suspecte themselues, and knowe their owne miserie before God. For these men were as good as they before their conuersion, and yet afterwarde confesse ỹ they were plunged in the Bottome of Hell, and drowned in the deapth of Damnation. He that hath eares to heare, let him heare, and he that hath eyes to see let him see: For if menne wil still soth them selues for all this, that they shalbe saued without feeling any chaunge, or worke of repentaunce:

It will cost them full deare in the ende, for Christes wordes will proue true, that whosoeuer repenteth not shal be damned,

that is, whosoeuer doeth not feele in him selfe what is Repentance, and find in him selfe the qualities thereof shal be condemned. For where Repentaunce is, there be the qualities of Repentaunce, and where the qualities be absent, there is no true repentaunce. So that where Christ sayeth, Except ye repent yee shall all perish: It is all one, as if he had sayde, except ye knowe the truth of Repentaunce, except yee can proue vnto your consciences the forgiuenesse of your sinnes, except you feele a chaunge and alteration in the bottome of your heart, of all your former lewd waies and misdemeanour, you shall surely perish and be damned. But let vs yet a little further search out ỹ qualities of Repẽtaunce, the Apostle in the seuenth Chapiter of the second Epistle to the Corinthians setteth downe seuen notable qualities, and effects of Repentaunce. The first of them he nameth Care. For beholde saith he, this thing that you haue byn godlie sorie what Care it hath wrought in you, that is, an earnest studie, and as it were a takinge thoughte to please God. For where true Repentance hath once wrought, there followeth

loweth great care afterward. Care I say to liue in the obedience of God, Care to keepe a good conscience, Care to reforme our houſholdes: Care to inſtruct Wyues, Children and Seruauntes in the knowe-ledge of GOD: Care to pray with them Morning and Euening: and generallye Care to perfourme all dueties belonging vnto God, ſo that Repentaunce is not a careleſſe, but a carefull thinge. Let not men thinke therefore, that although they welter in the careleſneſſe of the fleſhe, and ſlepe in ſecuritie all the dayes of their life, yet their repentance is good inough, yea and though they ſpend whole dayes, Nightes, Monethes and Yeares in vanities, Playes and paſtimes, in Idleneſſe, fonde, delight, pleaſure, and voluptuouſneſſe, in negligence of all dueties, forgetfulneſſe of God, and contempte of all good thinges: Yet for all this they repēt for their ſinnes, and hope to be ſaued as well as any other. But alas how can theſe thinges ſtand to-gether, to repent for ſinne, & to delight in ſinne, to hate ſinne, and loue ſinne. to flie from ſinne, and to follow after ſinne. But theſe men I perceiue, would fayne make

Saint

Saint Paule a lyar. For he sayeth, a man hath neuer repented, except he bée carefull afterwarde to please God. They say they do repent, & haue repented: although they liue neuer so wretchedly, & carelesly. But when all licencious and leud liuers, filthie whoremongers, beastly belligoddes, and careleſſe caitiffes, come to the kingdom of God, and are saued: then shall these men also come with them to be saued by careles repentaunce.

The next qualitie and effect of Repentaunce is named, clearing of our selues, that is, discharging of our selues, when sinne doeth accuse vs, and laye thinges to our charge, for when sinne and Sathan doeth terrifie the conscience of ỳ poore penitent sinner, by and by he fléeth vnto God and asketh forgiuenesse throughe Jesus Christ, and so cleareth himselfe, and maketh his Apologie against sinne, and Sathan, like as a man that is presented into the Court, vppon suspicion of whoredome, or any other notorious crime, muste cleare himselfe by witnesses, of that whiche is layde to his charge. So the conscience that is cited by Sathan before the Justice, and

Judge-

Judgement ſeate of God, cleareth it ſelfe by Repentaunce, and aſketh forgiueneſſe through Jeſus Chriſt. So that héere wee may ſée a wonderfull fruite of a penitente conſcience, it cannot abide the accuſations of ſinne: It can not be quyet till it bée reconciled vnto God: & ſo haue peace within it ſelfe. For this is to bée noted in the godly man, that when hée hath committed any ſinne, and his conſcience telleth him of it, by and by hée féeleth Leade within him, and is all heauie, and can not ſléepe quietly, till hee haue got into ſome corner, where hée may mourne, and lament to the full, and confeſſe, and lay open himſelfe vnto God, and ſo cleare him ſelfe through Chriſt Jeſus, his conſcience bearing him witnes that his ſinne is forgiuen. Whereas contrariwiſe the vngodly man, when his conſcience accuſeth him of ſinne, he diſpatcheth away all ſuche thoughtes, and treadeth them vnder foote, and by and by calleth for a paire of Cardes, or Tables, and ſome merrie companion to driue away the time, and to put out all ſuche thoughtes out of his heade, and ſo indéede hee increaſeth them more and more, and cauſeth

them

them rankle inwardly.

The thirde qualitie is called indignation, that is, a mortall and deadly hatred against sinne, as when a man doeth shudder and shake, and as it were grynde his teeth at the remembraunce of his sinnes: for this is alwayes in the penitent person, to loth and abhorre all sin from his heart, both his owne sinnes, and the sinnes of other, and to hate it as the Diuel himselfe, which is the Author of it, and to flie from it, as from the very cutthroate, and hangman of his soule, and to know it to be the onely thing that blindeth, that hardeneth, that separateth from God, and procureth all plagues, and diseases, both of bodye and soule against vs. Therefore he spitteth at it in defiance, and disdaineth it, and stoppeth his nose at the stincke of it, wheresoeuer he smelleth it.

The fourth thing is feare, whiche is a certaine awe of God, when a man is afraide to displease him. For the penitente person feareth alwaye, and breing priuie to his owne infirmity and weakneſſe (whē God neuer so litle withdraweth his grace, and leaueth him alone) worketh his Sal-

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nation with feare and trembling. He will not presume vpon former grace to commit any sinne, nor flatter himself in the mercy of God, and in the thinges that he hath alreadie tasted of God, to yeeld to some litle sinne, thinking he may doe that, and bee the child of God wel enough, because some of Gods children have fallen into greater, but rather he trembleth at the least motion of sinne, and is afraid of the temptations, whiche Sathan trumpeth in his waye, and is afraide when the temptations of sinne are vppon him, to satisfie the hunger of sinne, but rather he fighteth against sin, when sin fighteth against him, and presenteth the feare of God before his eyes (as godly Joseph in the assault of Putiphars wife) to be as it were a Tower of defence & Welspring of life, to auoide the snares of Death.

The fift thing is Desire, that is a hungring, and thirsting after righteousnesse.

For the penitent man is rauished with desire of good thinges. Hee desireth to be euery day better then other: He desireth to leaue euery day some sinne: He desireth to prayе. He desireth newe knowe-

leage

ledge, and nowe vnderstanding of heauenly things. He desireth to heare Sermons, and wil straine himselfe to heare thē. He desireth the company of the godly, he thinketh him selfe in heauē, when he is emongest them. He desireth the saluation of his very enemies, and prayeth for them. All these and many other such like desires are in the penitent man.

The first qualitie is zeale, which consisteth in the earnest imbracing of vertue, and hatred of vice, so that the penitent person, is zealous in euery good thing. Zealous of Gods glory in all places, in all cōpanies, and emongest all persons, hee cannot abide that Gods honour should be impeached, or his name blasphemed, or his glory trampled vnder foote by wicked mē, but he will open his mouth to reproue the wicked, and stand stoutly in the defence of Gods glorie. Hee is not like these Atheistes, and dissemblers, which are alwayes as is the companie, that is godly emongst the Godly: A Protestant emongest Protestantes: wicked amongest the wicked, a Papist emongest Papistes, a worldling emongest worldlinges, and a Swearer

emongest

emongeſt Swearers, a Weathercocke that turneth with euery wynde. The penitent man I ſay, is not of this ſtampe, but he is conſtant and zealous in all good things. Hee is zealous both againſt the pleaſures and profites of ſinne, though he might winne a whole worlde, or pleaſure himſelfe neuer ſo much, by committing a ſinne againſt God, yet will he refuſe it, for he hath learned from Chriſtes mouth, that it ſhall not profite a man to winne all the whole worlde, and to looſe his owne ſoule.

The laſt thing is Reuenge, that is, the penitent perſon is ſo offended, with the ſinne he hath committed, that hee will be reuenged of himſelfe for it. As for example, if he haue offended in gluttony, he wil Reuenge himſelfe by faſting two or three daies after: If he haue offended in whoredome, hee will be reuenged of his luſtes, by haltring, and bridling them euer after: If he haue offended in couetous catching and polling of other mens goodes, he will be reuenged of himſelfe by reſtitution, as was godly and penitent Zacheus, and this in deed is a ſpeciall fruite of Repentaunce

penitaunce, to reforme our selues in those thinges, wherein we haue moste offended. Nowe then you se (my deare brethren) what lieth in the bellie of repentance, and which be her inwardes, so that wee must needes now come to the vnlaūing, and vnbowelling of Christes wordes. Except ye repent sayth he, ye shall all perishe, that is: except ye haue this forenamed care, you shall all be damned: Except ye haue this clearing of your selues, you shall be damned: Except you haue this indignation, you shall all be damned: except you haue this feare, you shalbe damned: Except you haue this desire, you shal al be damned: Except you haue this zeale, you shall all be damned. Except you haue this reuenge, you shall all be damned.

For our Sauiour Christe doeth not speake of the bare name of Repentaunce: But of Repentance with al his furniture, and appurtenances: so that who so euer hath not Repentaunce with all his qualities and effectes, or at leaste some measure of them, he hath no Repentaunce in deed, and therefore shall be damned. For except ye repent ye shall all perishe. But

me thinketh I here some man say Here is nothing but damnation, damnation.

You preach nothing but the law: Let vs heare of the Gospell. My brethren I protest vnto you, that I speake of loue, whatsoeuer I speake, I desire the saluation of you all, if I could win but two in all this congregation, I woulde count my selfe happy, & thinke that God had greatly blessed my labours.

And vndoubtedly, if I knewe any nearer way to bring you vnto GOD, then by preaching the Lawe, to make you knowe your selues, surely, surely, I would vse it. Or if I could be perswaded, that the preaching of the Gospel, and mercie would doe you more good: you shoulde heare of nothing, but Gospel, Gospel, mercie, mercie: But alas, I see that euerie careless, and euerie ignorant man presumeth vppon Gods mercy, I see that euerie filthy liuer, and notorious blasphemer abuseth Gods mercy, in applying it to him selfe without Repentaunce, so that they woulde make Gods mercie a cloake for their sinnes, I see that euerie man would faine be flattered in his sinne, & heare of it no more, but

haue the Gospell preached, which in déed belongeth not vnto them, continuing in their stubburnes: but only to the penitent sinner, which forsaketh himselfe, and groneth, and panteth vnder the burden of his sinne. Therefore, when I sée you humbled with the conscience of your sinnes, and grone and pant vnder the burden of them, when I sée your faces blubbered with weping, and your hearts mollified, and sorrowing with care, then will I comforte you, and cease to preach the lawe. But I praye you, will you steale, murther, and commit adultery, and yet heare of mercy? Will ye Worke, Sweare, blaspheme, and Rayle, and yet heare of mercy? Will you serue sinne, hate vertue, and followe your owne lusts, and yet heare of mercy? Would you haue Plaisters before you haue woundes: Would you haue Phisicke, before you be sicke? Would you be let bloud, before you haue nede? Would you not account him a foolish Physitian, that wil minister Phisicke to a whole man? Wouldе you not thinke him an vnskilfull Surgion, that will applie a gentle salue to an olde festered sore, and not rather Corsie it? Then

knowe

knowe my brethren, that because you are ful of grosse humors, you must haue strong purgations: Because ye are full of olde festered woundes, you muste haue Corasiue Salues, for that is the beste for you, and the speedieste way to recouer your healthe, and for as muche as you bee rough Horses: you muste haue a rough rider: And harde knobbie timber, must haue harde wedges, and hard strokes with a beetle. We preach the Lawe to driue you to Christe, Wee preach Iudgementes, to make you seeke Mercie: Wee preach damnation, to bring you to saluation. But to preache Mercie and forgiuenesse, before men see their sinnes, or knowe their miseries by the preaching of the Lawe, is to preach the Gospell vnprofitably. For, he that is ignorant of the Lawe, knoweth not what misery is in himselfe: nor what mercie is in God.

What father is there, who if his childe should play the stubborne boy, and disobey him in euery thing he commanded, would stroke his heade, and say hee were a good boy, and not rather seuerely correcte him, and whippe him with a rodde? What master will commende his seruant for doing

what he lift, and not what he commaundeth him: euen so wee may not disobey and do euill, and looke to be flattered too, and not rather chidden. Let vs know then that although God vse searing, launcing, cozzing, and searching of the bones, and other violent remedies, yet in the meane while hee procureth our health by them. And let vs further vnderstand, that forasmuche as there is none other meanes to drawe vs vnto saluation, but by cleansing of al our vices, and the same cleansing can not be done, but by violence, when we be warned by the doctrine of the Lawe, so as our owne consciences accuse vs.

Although we like well to be nowe and then flattered, and soothed, yet let vs seeke to be spoken vnto earnestly, and to haue our faultes tolde vs, and to be made ashamed of them, and to haue our vnhonesty discouered, & not desire to be pleased. For it were the next way, to make vs rotte in our own filthines, if we should holde it in secret: it would cost vs deare the setting on, if wee shoulde be so flattered by men, and in the meane season the heauenly Judge shall thunder downe vppon vs.

Therefore,

Therefore, when anie man commeth to a Sermon, let him first and formost make his reckoning to be rebuked, as meete is, and let him vnderstande, that it is for his profit that he is not soothed. And if he haue itching eares, let him laye them awaye from him, assuring himselfe that else he is forecloſed, so as hée shall neuer receiue the doctrine to his profite and instruction. And let him be content to haue his soares rubbed and bewraied, that he may be brought to that, which is for his welfare. If a man please a sicke bodie, what shall become of him, shall hee giue him drinke euerie minute of an houre? Shall he giue him wine whereas he should giue him water? Shall hee giue him Sallets? It were the nerte way to poyson him. To bée shorte, it is certayne that a man doeth alwayes seeke his owne death, when hée would haue men to sooth him. But nowe which is better eyther that hée whiche hath the ordering of a sicke man, should yéelde to all his desires, or that hée should bridle him, notwithstanding that hee chafe and gnashe his teeth, because he may not haue his owne will in his desires? You see therefore how daunge-

rous a thing it is to flatter, and rayse vp men with the preaching of mercie: before they haue bin cast downe with the sense of Gods Iudgements. Cease therefore to open your mouthes to make hue and crie ouer the Countrey, saying: they preach nothing but the Law, the Lawe, damnation, damnation, vnlesse yée will take in Christ to, and make him one of the number, and accuse him of wante of wisedome, because he preacheth & cryeth out, that whosoeuer repenteth not, shalbe condemned. For my part I preache the Gospell, to whome the Gospell belongeth, and the Law to whom the Lawe belongeth. I preache Mercie to whom Mercie belongeth, and Iudgement to whome Iudgement appertayneth. And therefore holde your peace, and be content to bee ruled by the wisedome of God. But nowe let vs proceede to the third generall point, which is the time when we shoulde Repent.

The holie Ghoste in the Scriptures pointeth vs to the present time, and exhorteth vs to make that the time of our Repentaunce, as Ioell. 2. 12. Therefore also nowe the Lord sayeth, turne you vnto mée

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with al your heart, with fasting, with weeping and with mourning. Likewise in the 3. Chap. to the Hebrues, exhorte one another while it is called to daie, leaste anie of you bee hardned, through the deceiptfulneſſe of ſin. And in the ſame Chapiter. To day if you will heare his voice, harden not your harts as in the prouocation. So that now, euen now, euē now, is ꝑ time of our Repentaunce. Nowe whileſt hē calleth, now whileſt he ſpeaketh, now whileſt hee knocketh, let vs now therefore heare: let vs now therefore obey: Let vs now therefore redeeme this daie this preſent Wedneſday, whiche haue forſlowed ſo manye dayes, whiche haue ſo longe hardened our heartes, which haue let ſo many good thinges run out, and ſpill beſides. Let vs take vp this daie and make it the day of our repentaunce. Although we coulde neuer bee moued with any Sermon hitherto, yet let vs now be moued once at laſt. Let vs now ſay, this ſhall bee my day of Repentaunce, I wil deferre it no longer. But now wil I turne vnto my God, and forſake all my former wicked waies, and mine own imaginations, I will now chaunge the courſe

of my life, and beginne all newe againe. I will be acquainted with Gods worde, and take counsell there how to doe, and how to behaue my selfe in euery action. I will not onely reforme my selfe, but also my whole household, Wife, Children, and Seruauntes, according vnto the same. Thus my deare Brethren, I beseeche you purpose in your heartes without anye further delaye, and bee not like to Epicures, and slackgraces, whiche say youth will bee youthfull, and youth will haue his course, & what should we make it so holy, when we are young, tushe, there needs but a sigh an houre before death, let vs be merrie nowe, we shall neuer bee younger, wee will Repent when wee are olde. As though poore soules, they had repentance in their sleeue, and at their commandement, and that they could repent when they liste. No, no, these fellowes shall paye for their presumption. For God will giue them ouer to hardenes of hearte, and impenitencie, because they take so muche vppon them, and made so long delaies, that in the meane season they might enioye the profites and pleasures of sinne. Therefore good brethren, let vs not

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put it off from day to day, but let vs nowe seeke the Lord whilest hee maie bee found, and cal vppon him whilest hee is neere: let vs take time while time is, for time and tyde tarrieth for no man. Let vs knowe this to bee the time of our visitation. Our Sauiour Christe wepte ouer Ierusalem, because they knew not the time of their visitation. Hee reproueth the Iewes, because they coulde discerne the face of the Skye, but could not discerne the signes of the times. And surely in the ende it will turne to our destruction, if wee will not knowe this to bee the daie of mercie, the time of Grace, wherein God stretcheth forth his hande vnto vs, and wisedome crieth out in the stretes.

Therefore, nowe whilest wee haue the light, let vs walke as children of the light: the night commeth when no manne can worke. It shall be too late to call for mercie after this life, when the gates of mercy are shut vp, and Repentaunce will bee too late. Oh deare christians, let vs remember the fiue foolishe Virgins, whiche because they forsowed the time, had heauen gates barred vp against them. Let vs also remē-

ber the fearefull & dolefull example of the riche Glutton, which beeing in Hell torments yelled, and yelped for the least ease and help that might be, and could not haue it. An hundred thousande times therefore, better it is for vs to leaue our sinnes now to mourne for them now, and now to Repente, then hereafter alas when it shall be too late. Better nowe a great deale to take some paine, to strayne our selues to leaue our sinnes, and to make our hearte smarte for them, then to bee condemned for euer, and to cry in the bottome of Hell, we haue wearied our selues in the way of wickednesse and Destruction, and wee haue gone through daungerous waies: But we haue not knowen the way of the Lorde. What hath pride profited vs? Or what profite hath the Pompe of riches brought vs? All those thinges are passed awaie like a shadowe, and as a Poste that passeth by. We haue set our selues against the children of God, we had them in derision, and in a parable of reproch: We fooles thought their life madnesse, and their ende without honour: but loe they are counted emongst the children of God, and their portion is

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emonge the Saintes. Therefore let vs knowe the tyme of our calling, and let vs not be worse thē the foules of the ayre, the Storke knoweth her appointed tyme: the Turtle, the Crane, and the Swallowe obserue the time of their comming. The Husbandman taketh his times. The Mariner watcheth his tide. Therefore let vs also take the time, & turne vnto the Lorde whilest it is saide to day, which grace God graunt vs.

Nowe let vs returne vnto the fourth pointe, concerning the causes which may moue vs vnto Repentance. Herein I haue obserued nine especiall thinges. First, the great mercie of God, leadeth vs vnto Repentaunce. As Rom. 2. The bountifulnesse of God leadeth vs vnto Repentance, sayth the Apostle. God doth continually followe vs with his mercies and benefites, both concerning our soules & bodies, wee haue no good thinge which wee haue not receyued at his hands, we hold all that we haue of him, and to him wee are beholding for all. Great is his mercie towarde our bodies, but much greater towardes our soules, and euerie mercie and benefit, eyther to-

towarde soule or body, calleth vs to repentaunce. He giueth vs meate, drinke, and clothing, these call vs to repentaunce: He keepeth vs at his owne costes and charges here below, this calleth vs to Repentance: the Sunne, the Moone, and the Starres, calleth vs to Repentance. The birdes of the ayre, the fishes of the Sea, & the fruites of the yearth crie out vpon vs, both loude, and shrill: Repent, repent. All creatures moone vs to Repentaunce. Our creation calleth, our redemption crieth, our sanctification knocketh, and our Election mooueth to Repentaunce. What could God do more for his vineyard, ỹ he hath not done? Therefore let vs repent.

Secondly, the iudgements of God moue vs vnto repentance, for al ỹ thunderbolts, plagues, and punishments which God hath throwen downe vppon obstinate sinners, from the beginning of ỹ world, are so manie warning peces vnto vs, to awake vs out of the dead slepe of sinne, & to prick vs to Repentaunce. As in the 1. *Cor.* 10. When the Apostle hath cited diuers greate iudgementes of God against the olde Israelites for diuers sinnes,

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he concludeth: now all these things came vnto them for examples, and were writte to admonishe vs, vppon whome the endes of the worlde are come. So that all the Iudgementes wee reade of in the Scriptures, are so many admonitions, and as it were carteropes to drawe vs to Repentaunce. All the iudgementes we haue read of, heard of, do see and heare of euery day, knocke & with mayn strokes beate downe right vpon our consciences to repentance. The vgly monsters, straunge byrthes, fiery constellations, vnknowen Cometes, sodaine deathes, marueilous droughtes, vnwonted snowes, horrible inundations, forraine wonders, straunge apparitions, threatning of heauen aboue, w̄ streaming and shoting fire, trembling of the earth vnder our feete, and our houses ouer our heades, as of late dayes. What are al these but as it were great Cranes with beams, and Cable Ropes, to drawe vs vp to the Lord by Repentance.

Thirdly, the word of God haleth vs to repentance. For as God in olde time sent his Prophets both early and late, to call the rebellious Iewes to Repentaunce: so

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he sendeth abroad his preachers, and messengers in those daies, to sounde vp the trumpe of his word, & to ring the swæt bel of Aaron emongst thē, to awake thē to repentance, but alas how lightly are they regarded? Who heareth their voice? But surely this is the last remedie ỹ God hath apointed, & if this will not moue vs to Repentance, if this will not cure vs, then are we altogether vncurable.

Fourthly, the infinite number of sinnes we haue committed, ought to bee so manie spurres in our sides to pricke vs to repentaunce. It is sufficient saith Saint Peter, that we haue spēt the time past of our life after the lustes of the Gentiles, walking in wantonnesse, lustes, drunkennes, glutonie, drinkinges, and abhominable Idolatries. Therefore it is time now to repent. Oh that men woulde looke backe to themselues, and consider them selues as they were fortie, thirtie, twentie, or ten yeares ago. Oh that they would call to mind their open & secret sins, & mée thinketh it should make their heart bleed within their bellis to thinke vpon them. Oh ỹ they would consider how much time they haue mispent, &

how

how many good things they haue neglected, and altogether omitted.

Fiftly, the shortnesse of our life calleth earnestly vpon vs to repent. The time of our life is sixtie yeares, & ten, & if they bee of strength eightie yeeres, yet the strength is but labour and sorrowe, so it is cut off quickly, and we flie away saith the Prophet Dauid, we haue spent our yeres as a thought, Therefore he addeth. Teach vs to number our dayes, that wee may apply our heartes vnto wisdome. Our life for the shortnesse and inconstancie of it in the scripture is compared to grasse, to a vapour to smoke, and to a Weauers shuttle which glideth away swiftly. Euen so the daies of man passe away no man knoweth how. Man is of short continuaunce saith Job, & full of trouble. Experience teacheth, that to day a man to morowe none. Hence away we must al, here is no abiding place for vs, how sone we know not. Therefore let vs repent.

Sixtly, the small number of those which shal be saued: ought to thrust vs forward to repentance. Striue to enter in at the narrow gate, for many I say vnto you, will

seeke to enter in, and shal not be able saith Christe Luke, 13. 24. And in an other place he saith, the gate is straight, and the way narrowe that leadeth vnto life, and fewe there be that finde it. If men would consider of this, it would make them looke better about them, and trie with them selues, whether they be of that small number or no.

Seuenthly, Death threatneth vs, who is very terrible to the flesh, and the remembraunce of it very bitter to a man that is souled, and soked in the pleasures of this worlde. It flattereth no man, it regardeth not persons, it weigheth not friendship, it careth not for rewardes, it is very grim, vglie, and cruel, and killeth downe right where it hitteth. Therefore let vs repent.

Eightly, the day of iudgement and seconde appearing of the Sonne of man ought to quicken vs. The day of the Lord will come as a Theefe in the night, in the whiche the heauens shal passe away with a noyse, and the Elements shall melt with heate, and the earth with the workes that are therein shal be burnt vp, seeing therefore that all these things must be dissolued

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what manner of persons ought ye to be in holy conuersation and Godlines saith S. Pet.2.3. The Lorde Jesus shall shewe himselfe from heauen, with his mighty angelles in flaming fire, rendering vengeaunce vnto them that know not God, and obeye not vnto the Gospell of our Lorde Jesus Christ, saith the Apostle. 2.Thes.1. I sawe saieth Saint John. Apoc. 20. A great white Throne, and one that sate on it, from whose face fledde away both the earth and the heauen, and their place was no more founde. And I sawe the deade both great and small stand before GOD: and the bookes were opened, and another booke was opened, which is the booke of life, and the dead were iudged of those thinges, which were written in the bookes according to their woorkes. And the Sea gaue vp her deade, whiche were in her, and death and hell deliuered vp the deade, which were in them, and they were iudged euery man according to his woorkes. In these places we see both the sodainnesse, the fearefulnesse, and glory of Christs comming. For he shall not come poorely, and contemptuously as

in his first visitation, but he shall come verie princely, royally, and triumphantly, to the great terrour of all his enemies, when a consuming fire shall goe before him, and ten thousand thousandes of Angels waite vpon him: at what time the Kinges of the earth, & the great men, and the rich men, and the chiefe Captaines, and the mightie men, and euery bondman, and euery free man shall hyde themselues in dennes, and amongest the rockes of the mountaines and say to the rockes and mountaines fall on vs, & hide vs from the presence of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lambe, for the great day of his wrath is come, and who can stande? Apoc. 6. Therfore let vs repent.

The last thing is Hell tormentes then the which nothing is more vntollerable. Therfore saith Christe, Marke 9. If thine hand cause thee to offende, cut it off: It is better for thee to enter into life maymed, then hauing two handes to goe into Hell, into the fire that neuer shall bee quenched, where the worme dieth not, and the fire neuer goeth out. The Scripture speaketh very terribly to our senses, concerning

terning the estate of the damned persons calling it hel fire, damnation, the lake that burneth with fire & brimstone for euer. In 30. cha. of the prophesie of Esai, it is called Tropheth, and it is euen prepared of old, it is euen prepared for ỹ king: he hath made dæpe & large, ỹ burning therof is fire and much wood: the breath of the Lorde like a Riuer of Brimstone doeth kindle it: these spæches are terrible to our senses, & may maruellously amaze vs. But if I had the tongue of an hundred men nay of an hundred Angels, yet were I not able to vtter them, as some shall one day fæle them, much lesse were you able to conceiue thẽ. If al the tortures and cruel torments that can be deuised by the wit of man, were executed vpon some one, yet were it nothing to this. We poore wretches thinke there is no paine to a Collike, or a cruell Ague. But if all Collikes, Agues, and all other strange diseases could possibly light vpon one man, yet were it but a fleabiting to that which is to come. The pain is endlesse, easeleſſe, and remedilesse. The daies of their hellish torments shal neuer weare out, nor their yeares come to an ende, the

longer they continue, the lesse hope haue they. When as many yeres are expired, as there be men in the world, & starres in the heauens, when as many thousand yeares are ended, as there be stones, and sands by the Sea shore, yet still there be ten hundred thousande times so many moe to come: Those that wil not now be moued in hearing, shall then be crushed to pæces in feeling. All dronkards, swearers, whoremongers, vsurers, extortioners, liers, mockers, contemners, secure persons, iolly fellowes, roisting ruffians, lustie bloudes, the braue laddes of this world, and all other vnbeleuers shal one day be apprehended, and arraigned before the barre of Gods tribunal seate, where the Maiesty of GOD shall stand aboue them, with a naked sworde of vengeance, and a scepter of Iustice. The Deuil that olde Satanas shal stand on the one side to accuse them, and their own conscience on the other side to condemne thē, and the gaping gulfe of Hell vnderneath them, ready to swallow them vp for euermore, Then shall the dreadfull sentence of eternall woe, and damnation procéede against them. Go, ye cursed into hel fire, &c.

There

There they shall drinke as a iuste recompence for their iniquitie, the bitter cup of Gods eternall wrath and indignation, in the kingdom of darknes, and in the fearefull presence of Sathan, & all the cursed enemies of Gods grace, where the dolefull Dromme of Gods anger shall euer sounde throughy their eares, where shalbe wéeping & gnashing of téeth, where shall bée confusion, woe, and endles lamentation. Their gripes shall bée so greate, their groanes so déepe, and their garboiles so vntollerable, that they shall grinne like a Dog in their infernall conuulsions, and with howling, and yelling crie out, woe, & alas that euer I was borne: Oh that I had neuer béene borne, or that my mother had borne mee a Tode. For then should my condition haue bin better then it is. Cursed was the time I was begot in. The houre I was conceiued in, and the day that I sucked my mothers paps. Cursed I was alwayes, cursed I am, & cursed I shall be for euermore. Woe, woe, howe greate is my tormente, whose heart doeth not melte, whose eares doe not glowe, whose haires doe not stand vppon his heade, to heare these thinges.

Therefore dēere brethren let vs repent. If the mercie of God cannot allure vs, let his Iudgements scarre vs. If his Iudgementes cannot scarre vs, let his worde moue vs: If his worde cannot moue vs, let our sinnes amaze vs: If our sinnes cannot amaze vs, let the shortnes of our life dampe vs: if the shortnes of our life cannot dampe vs, let the smal number of those that shalbe saued affray vs: if that cannot affray vs, let death terrifie vs: if death cānot terrifie vs, let the daie of Iudgement shake vs: if that cannot shake vs, yet let Hell tormentes shudder vs, & rente vs in pæces. For verily verily my brethrē, if none of al these cā preuaile, if we wil not for all this repent, but be obstinate, then wee shall all perishe and be damned, according to Christs wordes. Now let vs procēde to speake of those thinges, which let and hinder vs from Repentaunce, whiche indēede although they bee in number infinite, yet at this tyme I will laie forth seuen especiall lettes, and hinderances vnto Repentance.

The first is vnbeliefe, that is, when men will not beleeue those things that are spoken and proued vnto them, out of the word

of

of God. This is it ỹ vomiteth vp all good thinges, and poysoneth the very intrals of a man, & kæpeth all good graces from vs. As appeareth. Math. 13. 58. Hee did not manye greate woorkes there for their vnbeleefes sake. And the 4. to the Hebrues, it is saide, Vnto vs was the Gospell preached, as also vnto them, but the worde that they hearde profited not them, because it was not mixed with fayth in those that heard it. So that here we may sée, although we heare neuer so muche, yet if wée bringe not faith with vs, wée shall neuer profite vnto Repentaunce. For vnbeliefe taketh vp our hartes for Sathan, and refuseth all the wholesome doctrine of saluation, and doth so harden them in the waies of sinne: that in the ende they become paste fæling, and cãnot be touched one whit, either with the iudgementes or mercies of God: But count the one as blasts of wynd: and make the other a couert for their filthinesse. You shall note some men, who when they haue heard their sinnes straightlie ripped vp by the word of God, and their iust damnatiõ proued by the same, without spædie, & earnest repentance, will breake out into these

wordes of vnbeléef. If it be as he saith God helpe vs, I hope it is not so, I trust I shall doe well inough for all this, as longe as I haue a good faith in God, and doe no bodie no harme, shall I leaue my pleasures, and my profites for their sayinges? What, doe they thinke none shalbe saued, but such as read the Scriptures, and heare Sermons? God forbid but those which doe not goe to heare sermons, should bée saued as well as they. Why may not one serue God as wel at home in his house, hauing good Bookes and good Prayers, as by comming to the Church to heare sermons, and seruice? Alas these men stand too much in their owne light, and betray what folly and ignorance is in thē. For they do thinke to be saued by any other means thē God hath appointed. Or when God hath auouched anie thinge in his word, will they accept against it, & so make God a liar? When God hath once set down a thing, and proued it to their faces will they yet reply? When God hath told vs that the preaching of the worde, is the ordinary meanes of our saluation, shal we hope to be saued although we contemn it, and neuer or verie seldome heare it? Is

not

not this plaine infidelity & vnbeliefe, that when God saith one thing, we will say an other: when God saith, yea, we will say no I hope not so. Yes surely, that is it, that stoppeth the way vnto Gods graces, and barreth vs out from repentance.

The seconde let is the presumption of Gods mercie, for if men be sharply reproued for their sinnes, and exhorted vnto repentance, by & by they take couert, saying. God is mercifull, God is mercifull, as though God were made all of mercie, and that ther were no iustice in him at al: and thus the wicked make Gods mercie an occasion to sinne, which thinge the Prophete Nahum in the first of his Prophesie doeth sharply reproue. The Lord saith he, is slow to anger, but he is great in powèr, and will not surely cleare the wicked. But because I haue spoken afore of this presuming and misapplying of Gods mercie, I will hère passe it ouer, willing you to note it as one special let vnto repentance.

The third hinderance is the example of the multitude, for that doth harden, & imbolden men vnto sin. As when many birdes flicker and flocke together, they fall v-

pon the net without any feare, but one or two alone wilbe afraid. Euen so the example of manie, and many sinne companions do imbolden men to run through ẏ snares of Sathã without any mistrust. Therefore it is said in Exod. 23. Thou shalte not followe a multitude to doe euill. This is the thinge that hinderth a great number from God, for they neuer loke vp vnto God, or to his worde, but stare vppon the common doinges of most men, and examples of the world, thinking if they do as the most men doe, as their forefathers haue doone before them, they are Cocksure and of an euẽ groũd. And herevpon ariseth their diuelish Prouerbe, doe as the moste men doe, and ẏ fewest will speake of you, but they haue forgotten S. Paules rule. Rom, 12. Fashion not your selues like vnto this world. These fellows that stand vpon the multitude wil reason thus: We se̊ none of ẏ great ones of the world, none of the noble, none of the rich, none of the wise, and prudent receiue this doctrine, but onely a fewe shackrags & beggerly rascals, and therefore it is a token that it is nothing worth, and that it is doubtfull, and not for vs to medle withal.

Loe

Loe, what thoughts may crépe in our heades, and how slily Sathan maie trumpe in our way, & blindfold vs, and lead vs away in ỹ darke, by doting vs with the example of ỹ multitude. Therfore let vs take hæde of those pitfalles, which Sathan layeth in our way, & not be carried away with these thoughtes and reasons. The wicked beare themselues in hand that they shal win the game, & that the goale goeth on their side, and there is nothing but crowing long before it bee daye, and greate triumphing emongst them before any stroke be striken, & that because wée be but a handful of people, and they a great multitude, & that in a maner the whole world agræth w̃ them to practise our death. Thus the diuell doth cast a mist before their eies, and closly lead them away from repentaunce. Therefore dére brethrẽ, let vs stand fast in the word of the Lord, and not be caried away, or bowed quite down with this raging stream of the multitude: but let vs knowe it to be one speciall engine of Sathan, whereby he driueth vs from repentaunce.

The fourth let vnto repentance is long custome of sinne. For that taketh away all

sense

ſenſe & fæling of ſinne, & making it as it were another nature vnto vs: So that we may aſwel alter nature as ſhake it of, whē it is once thus ſolder vnto vs through lōg cuſtome. Therefore it is ſaide Iere. 13.23. Can the blake-More chaunge his skin? or the Leopard his ſpots? thē may ye alſo doe good that are accuſtomed to do euil. Here the Prophet affirmeth, that it is as hard to cure an old diſeaſe that is bred in the bone and to remedie a ſinne that hath bene hatched, and brought vp with vs, as to waſhe a black-more white, or to change the ſpots of a Leopard, which cannot be with out deſtroying of nature. And ſurely, trie it who will, hee ſhall finde it as harde a matter to leaue an old cuſtom, whether it be of ſwearing, of gaming, of lying, of whoring, of euill company, or of any other ſinne, as to waſh an Aethiopian. Therfore it is written, Prou. 27. Though thou ſhouldeſt bray a foole in a morter, emonge wheate brayed with a peſtell, yet will not his fooliſhnes depart from him. So that as longe as we are in cuſtome with ſinne, the dore of repentance is barred vp againſt vs.

The fifth hinderance is long eſcaping of punish-

punishmēt for the wicked therby are starkened in sinne, and driuen of from repentance, euen as an olde thefe that hath stolen a long time, and escapeth both prison, and gallows, is animated more boldely to proceede in his wickednesse, thinking he shall so alwayes escape. So many filthy & lose liuers go forward in their abhominations without repentaunce, thinking that because God doth not incontinētly punish them, and shew some manifest iudgments & signe of his wrath vpon them, therefore they shalbe acquited for altogether. Whereas contrariwise, if God should by and by strike thē down assone as they had sinned by thundering vpon one, and lightning vpon another, and raining fire, & brimstone vpon the third it would make them afraid. Herevpon it is saide in Pet. 2. 3. 4. This first vnderstand that there shal come in the last dayes mockers, which will walke after their lustes, and say where is the promise of his comming? For since the fathers died al things continue alike from the beginning of the creation. But let these men well knowe, that when God hath delayed a long time, & prolonged the terme of the

wicked,

witked, at length he will shew ỹ although he waited for their repentance, yet he forgate not their misdœdes, but registred them before him, and packed them vp vpõ a great heape, to increase the terrour of his wrath.

The firt hinderance is the beholding of other mens endes. For when some men that haue liued a wicked, & an vngratious life, and haue bene notorious sinners euen to the worldward, so that euery man could point at them: yet, if vpon their death bed they can say a fe we gud words, and crye God mercy, and say their praiers, and forgiue al the world, and so die quietly: It is mercilous to heare howe the folish people of the world will exalt them, & iustifye them saying, hee made a very gud ende, as any man could make, and died as quiet as a Lambe, & set all things in gud order before he died. Herevpon an other wicked & monstrous verlet is encouraged to sinne. For thinketh he, such a man liued as losely as I, or any man else, and yet hee made a verie gud ende, and why may not I do so too? But alas these mens eyes are bleared. For to die quietly is no to die

godly

godly, to crie God mercie for fashion, is not to haue God mercifull, to say a fewe prayers with teeth outwarde, is not to die in the faith of Christ, for many may doe all this, and yet die miserably.

The last let is hope of long life, for while men fede, and beflette them selues in this hope, they waxe dronken in sin, and defer the day of Repentance. As the riche man in the Luke. 12. dreaming of his long life cast off all thought of God, and of the other life, and of Christes comming, and of Repentaunce, and all good thinges, and sayd within himselfe: Soule thou hast muche goods laid vp for many yeres, liue at ease, eate, drinke, and take thy pastime. Thus the bleareyed men of this world, choke vp Repentance, & quite smother it, by doting themselues with hope of long life. Therefore my deare brethren, I beseech you by the mecies of God in the bowels of Jesus Christ, that none of all these common lets may stay you from spedy, and vnfeigned Repentance. But that you may ouerstride them all, least vnhappily you being found without Repentance, and taken tardie in your sinnes, should all perish, and be damned

and according to Christs sentence. Wherfore in conclusion, let vs with godly Ezechias be afraide of Gods threateninges, sorrow afore hand, stand in awe of GOD examine our conscience, mourne for our sinnes, & lament inwardly, that when the wicked which haue swimmed in pleasures here belowe, shall enter into their eternal paynes, we may then, I say there, haue euerlasting peace, & rest, that when Iesus Christ shall appeare from heauen with all his holy Angels, we may haue crownes of glory, and victory clapped on our heades, and raigne with our God, & our sauiour his sonne, and all his Saintes and Angels in the middest of all ioy. in the heauens for euermore. To the which ioy he bring vs all, which hath so dearely bought vs, Iesus Christ the righteous: to whom with the father & the holy Ghost, be all honour, glory, praise, power, empire, and dominion, now and for euermore. Amen.

FINIS.